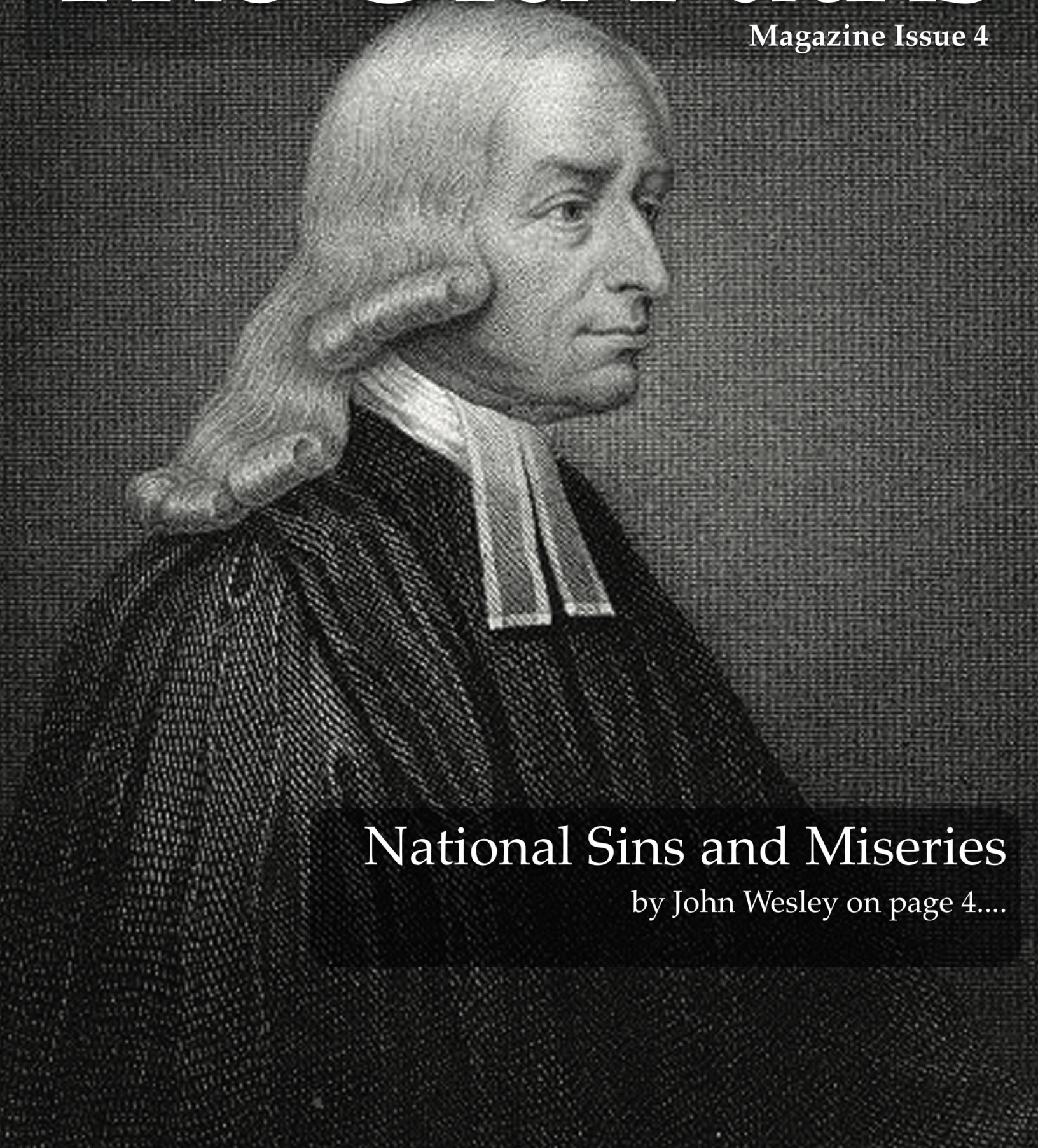


The Old Paths

Magazine Issue 4



National Sins and Miseries

by John Wesley on page 4....

Quotable Quotes...

Jonathan Edwards

"Yea, God is a great deal more angry with great numbers that are now on earth: yea, doubtless, with many that are now in this congregation, who it may be are at ease, than he is with many of those who are now in the flames of hell."

A.W. Tozer

"The man who is seriously convinced that he deserves hell is not likely to go there, while the man who believes that he is worthy of heaven will certainly never enter that blessed place."

C.H. Spurgeon

"The man who never reads will never be read; he who never quotes will never be quoted. He who will not use the thoughts of other men's brains, proves that he has no brains of his own."

John Wesley

"It is no marvel that the devil does not love field preaching! Neither do I; I love a commodious room, a soft cushion, a handsome pulpit. But where is my zeal if I do not trample all these underfoot in order to save one more soul?"

William Nicholson

"Those were great days, and great victories were won. We always managed a riot or a revival. Sometimes a riot and no revival, but never a revival without a riot."

From the Editor...



GOD IS CLEARLY SPEAKING in these days to those who do not have their ears plugged. This is a time of where the words of the prophet Joel should be heeded: "Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar." God is desiring to send a revival to the world but must first send a refining to the Church. Revival will bring us to our knees. Revival will smash our idols to powder. Revival will mean death to our selfish desires and pet creature comforts. It says further on in Joel: "and in the remnant whom the Lord

shall call." What a glorious "call" this is! God is preparing His remnant, His bride, for His last days purposes. May we be found "wise" not "foolish" having our hands upon our lamps trimming them in prayer and service.

David Wilkerson said over 20 years ago: "God promised to preserve America only if it turned from its evil. What more could He have done for America? Could He have been any more patient then He has been? 'I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts.' The unthinkable is going to happen to America and parts of Canada, and few will believe it. The prophets of peace and prosperity will reply, 'God has promised to keep us from the day of wrath, because we have kept the word of His patience.' This nation has not kept God's word, nor has the church. Like in the church of Sardis, there are only a few who have not defiled robes of white. Don't listen to the prophets of peace and prosperity. They are deceived. They have not heard the true Word of God."

What will it take for the Church of America to truly follow God in denying self and taking up the Cross of Christ? David Ravenhill responded in this way: "I'm hoping personally for some sort of an economic collapse. I know that sounds very extreme, but I believe it's going to take this to bring the church back to God. The prophet Isaiah said, 'When the earth experiences Thy judgments the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness. Though the wicked is shown favor, it does not learn righteousness.' (Isaiah 26:9) We have known the continued favor and blessing of God in this nation for years yet continue to live selfish, self-centered lives. God has simply become a means to an end. We have made Him to be the divine butler who stands waiting to meet our every whim and fancy. It's time for the church to be 'about our Father's business.' Please don't misunderstand me. I'm not wanting to go through another "great depression" but I fail to see any other way."

In Christ,

Greg Gordon

Vision

"Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for **the old paths**, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, we will not walk therein." -Jeremiah 6:16

The Old Paths Magazine is a free monthly periodical that is made available for the entire body of Christ. The main focus of the periodical is to propagate and promote the message of genuine biblical revival to this generation. This chief aim is expressed through many voices from Christian history. Copies of this periodical can be made for free distribution without permission.

Staff

Senior Editor - *Greg Gordon*
Proof Readers - *Joy Courville*

Contact

You can contact The Old Paths editorial staff by writing to the address below:

The Old Paths
P.O. Box 584
Regina, SK,
Canada, S4P 3A3

Email the editors at:
sermonindex@gmail.com

Subscribe to the magazine at:
www.oldpathsmag.com



The Essence of Prayer

THROUGH PRAYER, BY THE simple method of prayer, we become aware of Christ's Presence and learn to know Him."

"The essence of prayer does not consist in asking God for something but in opening our hearts to God, in speaking with Him, and living with Him in perpetual communion. Prayer is continual abandonment to God." "Prayer does not mean asking God for all kinds of things we want, it is rather the desire for God Himself, the only Giver of Life." "Prayer is not asking, but union with God." "Prayer is not a painful effort to gain from God help in the varying needs of our lives. Prayer is the desire to possess God Himself, the Source of all Life." "The true spirit of prayer does not consist in asking for blessings, but in receiving Him who is the giver of all blessing, and in living a life of fellowship with Him." "Prayer is not a kind of begging for favours; it is rather breathing and living in God." "A little child often runs to its mother and exclaims: 'Mother! Mother!' Very often the child does not want anything in particular, he only wants to be near his mother, to sit upon her lap, or to follow her about the house, for the sheer pleasure of being near her, talking to her, hearing her dear voice. Then the child is happy. His happiness does not consist in asking and receiving all kinds of things from his mother. If that were what he wanted, he would be impatient and obstinate and therefore unhappy. No, his happiness lies in feeling his mother's love and care, and in knowing the joy of her mother-love." "It is just the same with the true children of God; they do not trouble themselves so much about spiritual blessings. They only want to sit at the Lord's feet, to be in living touch with Him, and when they do that they are supremely content."

Sadhu Sundar Singh (1889-1929) - Was used of God in India where he ministered and gave witness to the principles of discipleship that Jesus Christ taught.



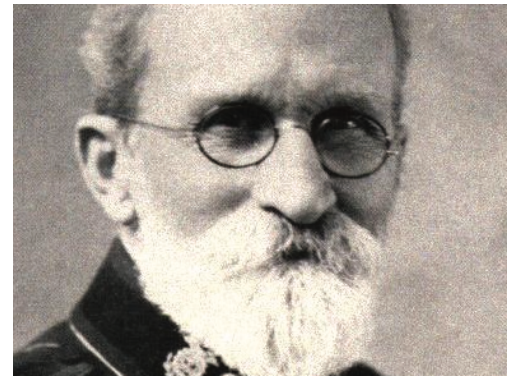
The Church Without the Spirit

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES gives us an account of a Church destitute of the Spirit. The picture corresponds in many particulars with that of the Church in the Apocalypse that had lost its Christ. The Church in Laodicea was rich and respectable, prosperous and influential, complacent and confident, but was blind to the tragedy on the doorstep. Their worship was faultless in form and passionless in spirit. There was no heresy in their creed, but there was no fire in their souls. The Spirit of Christ was outside. Ephesus and Laodicea have much in common, for where Christ is dishonored there can be no Pentecost.

Like priests, like people. Like minister, like members. Truth comes through personality; and the level of a preacher's experience determines both the range and level of the sermon. It also determines the level to which he can help others. John's Baptism in the pulpit resulted in a corresponding religion in the pew. It was a cold-water Gospel and a cold-water piety. To Paul's keen eye there was something wanting. They were sternly devout, orderly, reverent; but it was not Christian worship and experience. Their heads were bowed and their faces gave evidence of discipline, but they were not radiant. Their lives were marked by strict integrity, for John's cold-water religion was severely moral. They were as fervent as they were upright, and as religious as they were conscientious. Their religion was marked by a spirit of deep penitence and godly fear. They were upright in life, fervent in religion, devout in spirit, faithful in service; and yet, without the Holy Ghost. Their religion was a strict, external observance; not an Indwelling Presence. They lived by rule, not by illumination. God saves from within; they disciplined themselves from without. Religion to them was a joyless burden, for they carried their God on their backs instead of in their hearts.

Suppose we try Pentecost!

Samuel Chadwick (1840-1932) - Used of God to establish Cliff College and wrote many powerful books on revival and holiness. Had local revival during his time of ministry in England.



Fools For Christ's Sake

TO THE NATURAL HEART AND the unsanctified mind the commands of God are foolishness. 'Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee' (Gen. xii. 1), said God to Abraham. How foolish to leave home and wealth and greatness to go to a land that he knew not! But Abraham believed and obeyed and became heir of the world. 'I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth My people the children of Israel out of Egypt' (Exod. iii. 10), was God's word to Moses. What folly for this poor shepherd, who forty years before had fled from the face of Pharaoh a hunted murderer and vagabond, to seek to deliver a nation of slaves from the iron hand of the haughtiest, mightiest monarch of earth!

Does your call to work for God seem foolish, unreasonable, impossible? 'Have faith in God' (Mark xi. 22). Obey like Abraham and Moses and Paul, and you will yet praise Him for all the way He led you and for the part He gave you to do in winning the world from Satan back to God.

Does God call you? Be not disobedient to the heavenly vision. Stay not in the order of your going. Let nothing hinder you. Go and God will be with you as He was with Moses and Paul, and as the years speed by you will increasingly thank God that no business prospects, no fond friendships, no lust of power or love of secluded ease kept you from the battle's front with its burdens and bitter conflicts and fierce sorrows and soul-satisfying triumphs. One soul joining in the anthem of the redeemed ones around the Throne, saved from Hell through your labors, will pay you for all your toils; one look at the face of Jesus will reward you for all your privations. What care Peter and John and Paul now, if they did lose all to follow Jesus, and did suffer and die for the men they sought to save? And what will you care?

Samuel Logan Brengle (1860-1936) - Was an American Methodist born in Indiana who joined the Salvation Army in the 1890s. He was mightily used of the Lord.



National Sins and Miseries

"Perhaps the angel is now stretching out his hand over England to destroy it. O that the Lord would say to him that destroyeth, 'It is enough.'..."

I Have Done Wickedly

"LO, I HAVE SINNED, and I have done wickedly: But these sheep, what have they done?" 2 Sam. 24:17.

Is there not in several respects, a remarkable resemblance between the case of Israel and our own? General wickedness then occasioned a general visitation; and does not the same cause now produce the same effect? We likewise have sinned, and we are punished; and perhaps these are only the beginning of sorrows. Perhaps the angel is now stretching out his hand over England to destroy it. O that the Lord would at length say to him that destroyeth, "It is enough; stay now thine hand!"

Vice Is The Parent Of Misery

That vice is the parent of misery, few deny; it is confirmed by the general suffrage of all ages. But we seldom bring this home to ourselves; when we speak of sin as the cause of misery, we usually mean, the sin of other people, and suppose we suf-

fer, because they sin. But need we go so far? Are not our own vices sufficient to account for all our sufferings? Let us fairly and impartially consider this; let us examine our own hearts and lives. We all suffer: and we have all sinned. But will it not be most profitable for us, to consider every one his own sins, as bringing sufferings both on himself and others; to say, "Lo, I have sinned, I have done wickedly; but these sheep, what have they done?"

Foaming With Rage

Let not anyone think, this is but a small calamity which has fallen upon our land. If you saw, as I have seen, in every county, city, town, men who were once of a calm, mild, friendly temper, mad with party-zeal, foaming with rage against their quiet neighbours, ready to tear out one another's throats, and to plunge their swords into each other's bowels; if you had heard men who once feared God and honoured the king, now breathing out the bitterest invectives against him, and just ripe, should any occasion offer, for treason and rebellion; you would not then judge this to be a little evil, a matter

of small moment, but one of the heaviest judgments which God can permit to fall upon a guilty land.

Wisdom Is Fallen In The Streets

Such is the condition of Englishmen at home. And is it any better abroad? I fear not. From those who are now upon the spot, I learn that in our colonies also many are causing the people to drink largely of the same deadly wine; thousands of whom are thereby inflamed more and more, till their heads are utterly turned, and they are mad to all intents and purposes. Reason is lost in rage; its small still voice is drowned by popular clamour. Wisdom is fallen in the streets. And where is the place of understanding? It is hardly to be found in these provinces. Here is slavery, real slavery indeed, most properly so called. For the regular, legal, constitutional form of government is no more. Here is real, not imaginary, bondage: Not the shadow of English liberty is left. Not only no liberty of the press is allowed, -- none dare print a page, or a line, unless it be exactly conformable to the sentiments of our lords, the people, -- but no liberty of speech. Their tongue is not their

own. None must dare to utter one word, either in favour of King George, or in disfavour of the idol they have set up, -- the new, illegal, unconstitutional government, utterly unknown to us and to our forefathers. Here is no religious liberty; no liberty of conscience for them that "honour the king," and whom, consequently, a sense of duty prompts them to defend from the vile calumnies continually vented against him. Here is no civil liberty; no enjoying the fruit of their labour, any further than the populace pleases. A man has no security for his trade, his house, his property, unless he will swim with the stream. Nay, he has no security for his life, if his popular neighbour has a mind to cut his throat: For there is no law; and no legal magistrate to take cognizance of offences. There is the gulf of tyranny, -- of arbitrary power on one hand, and of anarchy on the other. And, as if all this were not misery enough, see likewise the fell monster, war! But who can describe the complicated misery which is contained in this?

Dying Groans Are On Every Side

Hark! the cannons roar! A pitchy cloud covers the face of the sky. Noise, confusion, terror, reign over all! Dying groans are on every side. The bodies of men are pierced, torn, hewed in pieces; their blood is poured on the earth like water! Their souls take their flight into the eternal world; perhaps into everlasting misery. The ministers of grace turn away from the horrid scene; the ministers of vengeance triumph. Such already has been the face of things in that once happy land where peace and plenty, even while banished from great part of Europe, smiled for near an hundred years.

O Truth, Whither Art Thou Fled?

O truth, whither art thou fled? How few have any acquaintance with thee! Do not we continually tell lies for the nonce, without gaining thereby either profit or pleasure? Is not even our common language replete with falsehood? Above a hundred years ago the poet complained,

"Is there a character more despicable than even that of a liar? Perhaps there is; even that of an epicure. And are we not a generation of epicures? Is not our belly our god? Are not eating and drinking our chief delight, our highest happiness? Is it not the main study (I fear, the only study) of many honourable men to enlarge the pleasure of tasting? When was luxury (not in food only, but in dress, furniture, equipage) carried to such an height in Great Britain ever since it was a nation?"

A Parent Of Sloth

*"O England, full of sin,
but most of sloth! Parlia-
ment used to meet 'hora
quinta, ante meridiem,'
"at five in the morning!.."*

Luxury is constantly the parent of sloth. Every glut-ton will, in due time, be a drone. The more of meat and drink he devours, the less taste will he have for labour. This degeneracy of the Britons from their tem- perate, active forefathers, was taken notice of in the last century. But if Mr. Herbert then said,

"O England, full of sin, but most of sloth!"

What would he have said now? Observe the differ- ence between the last and the present century, only in a

single instance: In the last, the Parliament used to meet 'hora quinta, ante meridiem,' "at five in the morning!" Could these Britons look out of their graves, what would they think of the present gen- eration?

Lord, Is It I?

Now let each of us lay his hand upon his heart and say, "Lord, is it I?" Have I added to this flood of unrighteousness and ungodliness, and thereby to the misery of my countrymen? Am not I guilty in any of the preceding respects? And do not they suffer because I have sinned?" If we have any tenderness of heart, any bowels of mercies, any sym- pathy with the afflicted, let us pursue this thought till we are deeply sensible of our sins, as one great cause of their sufferings.

The Anger Of God

But now the plague is be- gun, and has already made such ravages both in England and America, what can we do, in order that it may be stayed? How shall we stand "between the living and the dead?" Is there any better way to turn aside the anger of God, than that prescribed by St. James: "Purge your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts, ye double-minded?" First, "Purge your hands." Immediately put away the evil of your do- ings. Instantly flee from sin, from every evil word and work, as from the face of a serpent. "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth;" no uncharitable, no unprofitable, conversa- tion. Let no guile be found in your mouth: Speak to every man the truth from your heart.

Void Of Offence Toward God

Renounce every way of acting, however gainful, which is contrary either to justice or mercy. Do to everyone as, in parallel circumstances, you would wish he should do unto you. Be sober, temperate, active; and in every word and work, labour to have a conscience void of offence toward God and to-

ward man. Next, through the almighty grace of Him that loved you, and gave himself for you, "purify your hearts by faith." Be no longer double-minded, halting between earth and heaven, striving to serve God and mammon. Purify your hearts from pride, -- humbling yourselves under the mighty hand of God; from all party-zeal, anger, resentment, bitter- ness, which now, especially, will easily beset you; from all prejudice, bigotry, narrowness of spirit; from impetuosity, and impatience of contradiction; from love of dispute, and from every degree of an unmerciful or implacable temper. Instead of this earthly, devilish wisdom, let "the wisdom from above" sink deep into your hearts; that "wisdom" which "is first pure," then "peaceable, easy to be entreated," -- convinced, persuaded, or appeased, -- "full of mercy and good fruits; without partiality," -- embracing all men; "without hypocrisy," genuine and unfeigned. Now, if ever, "putting away with all malice, all clamour," (railing,) "and evil-speaking: Be ye kind one to another," to all your brethren and countrymen, -- "tender-hearted" to all that are in distress; "forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

Break Off Thy Sins By Repentance

And "now let my counsel be acceptable to" you, to every one of you present before God. "Break off thy sins by repentance, and thy iniquities by showing mercy to the poor, if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquility," --of what degree of it still remains among us. Show mercy more especially to the poor widows, to the help- less orphans, of your countrymen who are now numbered among the dead, who fell among the slain in a distant land. Who knoweth but the Lord will yet be entreated, will calm the madness of the people, will quench the flames of contention, and breathe into all the spirit of love, unity, and con- cord? Then brother shall not lift up sword against brother, neither shall they know war any more. Then shall plenty and peace flourish in our land, and all the inhabitants of it be thankful for the in- numerable blessings which they enjoy, and shall "fear God, and honour the king."

Editor Note: This article delivered by Wesley On Sunday, November 12, 1775, parallels many problems and miseries coming upon North America in our day. Oh that men would preach such messages from their pulpits to entire nations that are wayward from God.

John Wesley (1703-1791) - Founder of the Method- ist movement in England. He wrote many books on holiness of life and Christian service. Wesley was one of the key figures used in the great revivals in the 18th century.



City-Wide Repentance

"But preachers of righteousness who will proclaim the Word of God, crying, 'Thus saith the Lord,' without fear or favor..."

They Repented

WHILE REPENTANCE is distinctly an individual exercise, yet we have in the Word of God, as we have already seen, churches called upon to repent, and we learn from our Lord's words, in Matthew 12:41 and Luke 11:32, of the repentance of a city: "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it; because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here."

Prophets of Old

The prophets of old were set by God over cities and peoples and nations to call them to account for their evil-doing and to summon them to prepare to meet their God. The Saviour, as we have noted, dealt with cities as such, and nothing is more pathetic than His

lament over unrepentant Jerusalem: "And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation." (Luke 19:41-44).

A Message That Stirred London

Macaulay declared that the Wesleyan revival saved England from the horrors of anarchy and revolution. Yet Wesley's great work was preaching the Gospel and calling sinners to repen-

tance. That message stirred London and the other great cities of Britain to their depths, and even where it did not result in actual conversion to God it made people ashamed of the enormities they had condoned in church and state and led to a national renovation that was an untold blessing to millions.

A Clarion Call

Jonathan Edwards' clarion call to repentance and faith in God meant more to the young American nation than can now be computed. He put the fear of the Lord in men's hearts and this largely molded the character of the fathers of the republic.

Such preaching inevitably produces results in reformation of life and purification of civic relationship. When the conscience is reached and the will is so

captivated by grace that men turn to the Lord and cleave to Him with purpose of heart, all other desirable results will soon manifest themselves.

What is Needed

What is needed in every city of every land is, not a mere "new deal" or a political reformation, but preachers of righteousness who will proclaim the Word of God, crying, "Thus saith the Lord," without fear or favor, faithfully dealing with the problems of the day in the light of the cross of Christ.

Harry Ironside (1876-1951) - Wrote more than 60 books as well as many pamphlets and articles on Bible subjects.



Pentecostal Revivals

“Sham revivals are those in which these conditions are either aped or ignored, and result in a fizzle instead of a Pentecostal deluge...”

Cloud-bursts of Salvation

FULL-ORBED PENTECOSTAL revivals are cloud-bursts of salvation, caused by the spiritual atmosphere being so electrified by the Holy Ghost that believers are fully sanctified, sinners converted, opposition confounded, and the devil repulsed.

Pentecost was such a revival. By studying it and other New Testament revivals we can learn the principles which govern these mighty movements. They are the Pentecostal Church, like a mighty army, in motion against a determined and entrenched foe.

Mechanical Efforts

The difference between true revivals and the mechanical efforts of

Christless clubs to secure members is seen from the following facts:

Conditional Revivals

Pentecostal revivals are conditional revivals. They are cloud-bursts of salvation, caused by the Holy Ghost, yet the precipitation is conditioned upon human compliance with certain spiritual laws. Given one hundred and twenty persons as dead to sin and the world, as absorbed in Christ, as loyal to His instructions, as united, prayerful, obedient, earliest and expectant, as was the first Pentecostal Church, and such revivals would be the rule instead of the exception, varying in quantity of converts with character of surroundings.

It is impossible to have Pentecostal revivals without Pentecostal material. A fire can not be built with sea-soaked

wood. World-soaked preachers and churches must be kiln-dried before they are fit for revival kindling wood. A box on a street corner is a better site for a Pentecostal revival than a fine cathedral full of spiritual mummies. Prayer, fasting, the baptism of the Holy Ghost upon the church, Holy Ghost preaching, testimony and personal work are all conditions of Pentecostal revivals.

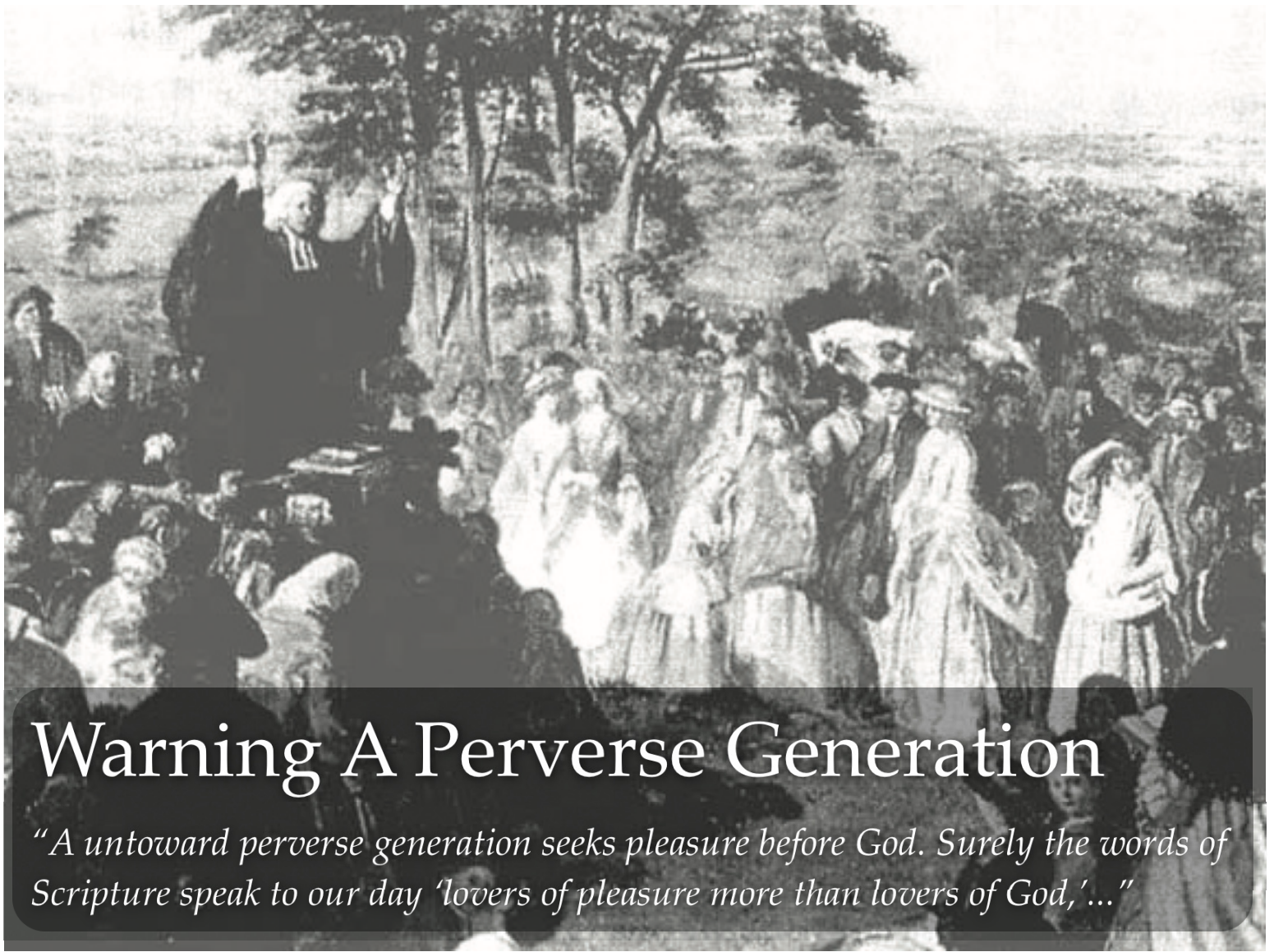
Sham revivals are those in which these conditions are either aped or ignored, and result in a fizzle instead of a Pentecostal deluge. A refusal to meet Pentecostal conditions on part of preacher or people, or both, has caused the criminal abortion of many a revival. Perpetrators of the crime are guilty of soul-murder. Meeting the conditions precipitates Pentecost. As they are so simple, reasonable and clearly re-

vealed, all churches may embrace them, and thus share the rich results that follow.

Contagious Revivals

They are contagious revivals. Their promoters were magnetic centers of revival power. Full of God and His gifts they stormed the citadels of sin wherever their conquering Captain led. The fortifications of sins and superstitions and carnality which defied them, were shattered by the dynamite of divine power. The works of the devil were burned up under the blazing fire of revival truth.

Martin Knapp (1853-1901) - His pastorate was a circuit assigned to him in 1877 by the Methodist Michigan Conference. In 1897, he founded the International Holiness Union.



Warning A Perverse Generation

"A untoward perverse generation seeks pleasure before God. Surely the words of Scripture speak to our day 'lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God,'..."

A Untoward Generation

A WICKED AND PERVERSE generation seeks after a sign. A carnal, lukewarm, lax, unbelieving Church sits back and demands of God the supernatural to give value to His credibility. The spotless bride often looks more like a self-absorbed whore. Dennis E. Green said: "We feast on the bounty provided by our husband while neglecting his wishes that don't excite and please us. We seek to be fulfilled by our selfish pursuits rather than by serving Him." A untoward perverse generation seeks pleasure before God. Surely the words of Scripture speak to our day "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God," did I forget to mention that God said when this happens it would be the "last days." This is a generation of men that have plugged their ears shut and are shutting their vanities and filth loudly. There is no more restraint in the world, not more culture or virtue in dealings. Even the most dignified actions of men are plagued with the continual thoughts of their wicked perverse minds. Those who are walking apart, walking in holiness with God are a reproof to this

whole bankrupt system of evangelical Christendom that we see. The simple life of one who has fully counted the cost and has fully surrendered to Christ will be a reprove to the church and the world. There is a sleeping world and a sleeping church that needs to be awaked. A.W. Tozer said: "Religion today is not transforming people; rather it is being transformed by the people. It is not raising the moral level of society; it is descending to society's own level, and congratulating itself that it has scored a victory because society is smilingly accepting its surrender." May we be "salt" and "light" in the world bringing preservation and exposure to the persuasive wickedness in men's hearts.

As In The Days Of Noah

Our Lord Jesus Christ said that in the end times it would be "as the days of Noah were." When I read the story of Noah I not only read: "that they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage" but also that "the wickedness of man was

great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Alas! is it not in our day. Men with such depraved wicked minds, sin soaked, sex soaked, so that nothing is pure anymore! All is wicked! The same wickedness that crucified our Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ is resident in the hearts of men in this generation.

We read further in the story of Noah and it says: "It repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart." Does it grieve the heart of the Lord today that "he had made man?" What type of wickedness would it take to wish we never birthed a child? How wicked does that child need to be in our sight, how repulsive? The Scripture continues: "The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence." When God's eyes looked upon the earth it says: "for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth." What a frightening picture, of men that have ruined themselves. A hedonistic, selfish, violent, wicked culture! A God-rejecting culture. This is

where we find ourselves. We are comfortable with sin in our day, we call "good, evil and evil, good!" And God says woe unto us!

Oh, we want a nice pretty picture of the world and our goal is to simply share with people "God loves you." Could you imagine Noah preaching "God loves you" with a big smile on his face to that wicked generation. Do you think Noah hung a sign on the ark saying "God loves you?" Come on! we are going to stand before a holy God that has called us to preach repentance to men with our life's and words. Noah was a repentance preacher, firstly that he separated himself from the whole wicked world system, and secondly in his preaching he shared that message. The church cannot preach the true gospel until they have fully repented and are living in that reality. A separated church is the only Church! God is calling men to be separated unto His will from our rotten dirty selfish wills. The words of the Epistle to the Hebrews said of Noah: "by the which he condemned the world." He condemned the world by living righteousness and staying pure amidst the moral landslide around him.

As In The Days Of Lot

Our Lord Jesus Christ also said that in the end times it would be "as it was in the days of Lot." When I read the story of Lot I not only read that: "they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded" but also that "the cry of Sodom and Gomorah is great, and because their sin is very grievous." Alas! is it not in our day. Men's sins are very grievous before the Lord. Sodomites flaunting their "grievous sin" before God arrogantly. Men were unashamed in their sins and were not scared of the possibility of judgment. Today it is the same. The Moral decadence of the world today is approaching at least or surpassed Sodom of late. David Wilkerson spoke on this sickening trend over 20 years ago: "In other words, 'If fire is coming, we choose to live it up to the end and stew in our juices!' This is the attitude of the gay community now; it is the attitude of the rich, lukewarm church; is the attitude of millions of Americans who have heard dire warnings for so long they no longer are moved by them."

Hear the words of the angels to Lot as recorded in Scriptures: "Escape for thy life: look not behind thee." The world is becoming more and more as Sodom in our day. Sodomy is common place in the entire world. No culture can withstand this perverted sexual landslide. Saints of God, "escape for your life" let not the world and its spirit defile you. Stand against the wickedness that is prevalent, be a

voice of righteousness. Scripture says that Lot was a "righteous man" and "dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds." Surely we must be "vexed" also in our day, are we becoming used to this wicked, lawless, godless society? Wake up and "escape for your life" dear Christian. Be not found amongst the wicked in their error, live in such a way that you are a rebuke and pain in the sides of those that live wickedly.

Sodom wants to defile you and spot your garments. The whole entire city of Sodom and Gomorah came out to defile the holy angels. Something in them desired to pervert that which was right and true. This is wickedness that has fully matured that desires to defile everything that is not corrupted. We live in such a society that demands men and women to be defiled and to partake of its wickedness.

"Those that after should live ungodly" is a Scriptural definition of the people of Sodom and Gomorah. Are you godly or "ungodly"? Where is your allegiance dear reader? Dare I say that many in that last day before the Judgment Day of God who claimed Christ and professed Christianity will be "pillars of salt." They will be speechless, their life will bear witness against them in that day. Let us set ourselves apart from Sodom in words, actions, dress, life. If the world cannot tell the difference between Christians and the world something is wrong.

A Voice Of Righteousness

Speak to this generation. Be a voice of righteousness! Let your voice be counted for righteousness. Speak for the Lord Jesus Christ. Hear the words of David Wilkerson telling of the preaching that is needed in our day: "John the Baptist comes out of the wilderness to face another generation going to hell. A generation under judgment. A generation of religious vipers. Proud pharisees, hypocrites! This is the generation that is going to be visited by the incarnate Son of God. But first God sends a preacher to prepare the way of the Lord and make His paths straight. John came preaching repentance! Listen to his message all of you that don't like hard preaching. All of you that want to go to Church where there is candy cotton preaching. 'Oh generation of vipers, bring forth fruit suitable to repentance. He's laid an axe to the root, every tree that not bear fruit is going to be cast down and thrown in the fire. He's got a fan in His

hand and He's going going to purge you. He's going to burn up all the chaff with unquenchable fire.' This is the preaching that God sent! This is the kind of preaching that God uses to make the paths straight for the Master. It's not a message conducive to self-esteem. It's not a how to message, it's not success message. John did not tip toe around sin either! He was told to warn people to flee from the wrath to come!" Oh how we need such a message that is powerful, anointed, convicting that will bring people to an end of themselves. Stand up and preach the word of God. Preach repentance! Preach from the housetops saints let not your words fall to the ground.

This generation needs a clarion call to repentance. John came preaching repentance. Jesus came preaching repentance. The Disciples came preaching repentance. The Apostles came preaching repentance. May we come preaching repentance also. Be counted as a voice of righteousness. Let not this generation go by not hearing the word of "repentance." This is God's last call for America, for Canada. We are coming upon the worst of times, the world is looking for answers, the world is looking for hope. In a world full of iniquity, lawlessness, perverseness, wickedness, sinfulness, madness, there is a need for smiting, convicting, repentance preaching in the Holy Ghost.

Politics will not set a standard of righteousness back to this world. The only hope is those that are going to be raised up by God as a force and standard or righteousness. God is raising these fearless, anointed, God-filled men who will proclaim the message of righteousness, holiness and the majesty of God. God is looking for men who are willing to be those who will make the paths straight for the Lord again. Amongst this "wicked and perverse" generation is God going to fine any that are willing to "stand" and "proclaim" the message of righteousness? Will you take heed to this calling? Will you stand?"

"Could you imagine Noah preaching "God loves you" with a big smile on his face to that wicked generation..."

"Let us set ourselves apart from Sodom. If the world cannot tell the difference.. something is wrong..."

Greg Gordon (1979 - Present) - founder of sermonindex.net ministry. His desire is to pray for and see society changing revival in North America. Currently living in Victoria, Canada.



The Joy Of Obedience

"This has now been revealed to me, not as a vision, but as a reality. I have seen the Lord Jesus as the way to perfect rest when we yield to Him..."

The Joy Of Obedience Is Foremost

LONG AGO I CAME ACROSS this sentence: "Perfect obedience would be perfect happiness, if only we had perfect confidence in the power we were obeying." I remember being struck with the saying as the means of a possible, though undreamed of, way of happiness. I thought of that saying often, even when full of inner rebellion. It gave me the vision of a rest and yet a vision of a possible development that would soothe and at the same time satisfy all my yearnings.

Need I say that this rest has now been revealed to me, not as a vision, but as a reality. I have seen the Lord Jesus as the way to perfect rest when we yield to Him and take His yoke upon us.

Dear hesitating soul, you are missing such joy! The Master has revealed Himself to you and is calling for your complete surrender. Yet, you withdraw and hesitate. You are partially willing, and you think it is fit and proper that you should feel thus. But a complete surrender, without any reserve, seems to you

to be too much. You are afraid of it. You think it involves too much and is too great a risk.

Then, too, you see other souls who seem able to walk with easy consciences in a far wider path than that which appears to be marked out for you, and you ask yourself why this is so. It seems strange that you must do what they do not have to do, and must avoid what they feel free to do.

Surrender Without Limitation

Dear Christian, this very difference between you is your privilege, though you do not yet know it. Your Lord says, "He that hath My commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me; and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father. and I will love him, and will manifest myself to Him." You have His commandments. Those you envy do not have them. You know the mind of your Lord about many things. Those walking in darkness do not. Is this not a privilege? Should you regret that your soul is in such close relationship with your Master that He is able to tell you things which those less

close may not know? Do you not realize the tender degree of intimacy in this?

Relationships In Life

There are many relationships in life that require little devotion. We may have pleasant friendships with one another, and yet spend a large part of our lives in separate interests and goals. When together, we may greatly enjoy one another's company, but when we are separated we are upset or anxious. There is not enough love between the two parties to give either the right or the desire to enter into and share each other's most private affairs. A certain degree of reserve and distance seems to be the suitable thing in this kind of relationship, but there are other relationships in life where all this is changed. The friendship becomes love. The two hearts give themselves to each other, to no longer be two, but one. A union of soul takes place, which makes all that belongs to one the property of the other. Separate interests and separate paths in life are no longer possible. Things that were acceptable before become unacceptable now, because of the nearness of the tie

that binds. The reserve and distance suitable to mere friendship becomes fatal in love. Love gives all and must have all in return. The wishes of one become binding obligations to the other, and the deepest desire of each heart is that it may know every secret wish or longing of the other, in order that it may gratify it.

A Love Relationship

When this kind of love relationship exists the people involved do not complain of the yoke. They do not envy the cool, calm, reasonable friendships they see around them. They do not regret the closeness which this kind of love requires or the obligations it creates. Rather, they glory in these obligations and inwardly pity the ones who do not have such a relationship! Every fresh revelation of the wishes of the loved one is a fresh delight and privilege. No path is considered too hard for them to travel.

If you have ever known this, even for a few hours in an earthly relationship, if you have ever loved any of your fellow human beings enough to find sacrifice and service on their behalf a joy, do so also with your divine Savior. If a complete surrender of your will to the will of another has ever been a blessed and longed-for privilege, then, by all the tender, longing love of your heavenly Master, I beg you to let it be so toward Christ!

He Has Given All

He loves you with more than the love of friendship. He has given you all, and He asks for all in return. The slightest reserve will grieve Him to the heart. He did not spare Himself. How can you spare yourself? For your sake He completely surrendered all that He had, and for His sake you must surrender all that you have, without limitation or measure.

"He has given you all, and He asks for all in return. The slightest reserve will grieve Him to the heart..."

Measureless Devotion To Him

Oh, be generous in your self-surrender! Meet His measureless devotion for you with a measureless devotion to Him. Be glad and eager to throw yourself completely into His loving arms and to hand over the reins of government to Him. Whatever there is of you, let Him have it all. Give up forever everything that is separate from Him. Consent to give up, from this time forward, all freedom of choice. Glory in the close relationship with Jesus which makes this enthusiasm of devotedness not only possible, but necessary.

Separated Unto Him

Have you ever longed to lavish your love and attentions on someone who is unapproachable or who is

Matthew Henry

"I would think it a greater

a stranger? Have you ever strongly wanted to be surrendered and devoted to someone? Will you shrink or hesitate if you hear the loving voice of your Lord calling you into a place of nearness that will require a separation from all else and will make an enthusiastic devotion not only possible, but necessary? Will you think it harsh that He reveals to you more of His mind than He does to others and that He will not allow you to be happy in anything that separates you from Himself? Do you want to go where He cannot go with you, or to have desires which He cannot share?

A Thousand Times No!

A thousand times no! You will meet His lovely will with an eager joy. Even His slightest wish will become a binding law to you and it will break your heart to disobey it. You will glory in the paths He marks out for you and will grieve for the ones who have missed this precious joy. The obligations of love will be sweetest privileges. Surrendering all that you have to the Lord will seem to lift you into a region of unspeakable glory. The perfect happiness of perfect obedience will dawn upon your soul, and you will begin to know something of what Jesus meant when He said, "I delight to do Thy will, O My God."

From the very first your soul has cried out eagerly and gladly to all His offers, "Yes, Lord, yes!" You are more than ready to pour out all your richest treasures of love and devotion to Him. You have surrendered to Him with such enthusiasm that it

may disturb and distress some moderate Christians. Your love makes a separation from the world necessary. A lesser love cannot even understand this. It is with love that you sacrifice for and serve your loved ones. The life of love gives you the right to lavish your all upon your beloved One. Your Lord claims far more from you because of your union with Him. He makes His secrets known to you. He looks for an instant response to every requirement of His love.

Let Him Have All

It is altogether wonderful. It will not matter to you if men hate you and separate themselves from you. It will not matter to you if men condemn you. If this happens for His sake, Scripture says your reward is great in heaven for if you are a partaker of His suffering, you will also be a partaker of His glory.

"Personal service to your Lord will enrich the poorest life and give the most monotonous existence a heavenly glow..."

Your love and devotion are His precious reward for all He has done for you. It is unspeakably sweet to Him. Do not be afraid, then, to let yourself go in wholehearted devotion to the Lord. Others may not approve, but He will. That is enough. Do not be stingy with your obedience or your service. Let your heart and your hand be as free to serve Him as His heart and hand were to serve you. Let Him have all there is

of you: body, soul, mind, spirit, time, talents, voice, everything. Lay your whole life open before Him so that He may control it. Say each day to Him, "Lord, enable me to regulate this day to please You! Give me spiritual insight to discover what Your will is in all the relationships of my life. Guide me regarding my desires, my friendships, my reading, my dress, my Christian work." Do not let a day or an hour go by in which you are not consciously doing His will and following Him completely.

A Heavenly Glow

Such a personal service to your Lord will enrich the poorest life and give the most monotonous existence a heavenly glow. Have you ever grieved that the romance of youth is so soon lost in the hard realities of the world? Bring Christ into your life and into all its details, and a romance far grander than the brightest days youth could ever know will thrill your soul, and nothing will seem difficult or unbearable again.

When Christ was on earth, He declared the truth that there was no blessedness equal to the blessedness of obedience. "And it came to pass, as He spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto Him, Blessed is the womb that bare Thee, and the paps which Thou hast sucked. But He said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it" (Luke 11: 27-28).

It is more blessed to hear and obey His will than even to have been the earthly mother of our Lord!

May our surrendered hearts reach out with an eager delight to discover and embrace the lovely will of our loving God!

Hannah Whitall Smith (1832-1911) - Writer, evangelist, and reformer. In 1875 she published *The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life*, a guide to sanctification and complete surrender.



Oswald J. Smith



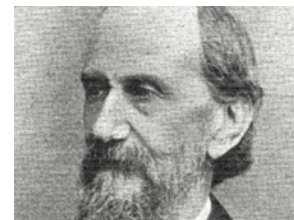
George Whitefield



Leonard Ravenhill



Andrew Murray



"Peace is such a precious jewel that I would give anything for it but truth."

"Some people do not like to

"The mission of the church is missions"

"Any church that is not seri-

"How can I help weeping when you will not weep for yourselves, though your immortal souls are on the verge of destruction!"

"It is a poor sermon that gives no offense; that neither makes the hearer displeased with himself nor with the preacher."

"Would ministers preach for eternity! They would then act the part of true Christian orators, and not only calmly and coolly inform the understanding, but, by persuasive, pathetic address, endeavour to move the affections and warm the heart."

"Among the many reasons assignable for the sad decay of true Christianity, perhaps the neglecting to assemble ourselves together, in religious societies, may not be one of the least."

"Worldly-mindedness so easily and craftily besets the hearts of men."

"At the day of judgment we shall all meet again."

"Today Christians spend more money on dog food than missions."

"We Christians are debtors to all men at all times in all places, but we are so smug to the lostness of men. We've been 'living in Laodicea', lax, loose, lustful, and lazy. Why is there this criminal indifference to the lostness of men? Our condemnation is that we know how to live better than we are living."

"In the New Testament church it says they were all amazed - And now in our churches everybody wants to be amused."

"The Bible definately is infal-

"God is ready to assume full responsibility for the life wholly yielded to Him."

"There is need of a great revival of spiritual life, of truly fervent devotion to our Lord Jesus, of entire consecration to His service. It is only in a church in which this spirit of revival has at least begun, that there is any hope of radical change in the relation of the majority of our Christian people to mission work."

"Prayer is reaching out after the unseen; fasting is letting go of all that is seen and temporal. Fasting helps express, deepen, confirm the resolution that we are ready to sacrifice anything, even ourselves

"How can I help weeping when you will not weep for yourselves, though your immortal souls are on the verge of destruction!" -George Whitefield

hear much of repentance; but I think it is so necessary that if I should die in the pulpit, I would desire to die preaching repentance, and if out of the pulpit I would desire to die practicing it."

"Whatever we have of this world in our hands, our care must be to keep it out of our hearts, lest it come between us and Christ."

"No attribute of God is more dreadful to sinners than His holiness."

ously involved in helping fulfill the Great Commission has forfeited its biblical right to exist."

"In the Irish Revival of 1859, people became so weak that they could not get back to their homes. Men and women would fall by the wayside and would be found hours later pleading with God to save their souls. They felt that they were slipping into hell and that nothing else in life mattered but to get right with God."

"I'd rather have people hate me with the knowledge that I tried to save them." -Keith Green

libile, how else could it survive so many years of bad preaching?"

"No church group that knows spiritual warfare has wiener roasts or even passion plays."

to attain what we seek for the kingdom of God."

"CHRISTIAN PEOPLE, ARE YOU figuring round and round to get a little property, yet neglecting souls? Beware lest you ruin souls that can never live again! Do you say -- I thought they knew it all? They reply to you, 'I did not suppose you believed a word of it yourselves. You did not act as if you did. Are you going to heaven? Well, I am going down to hell! There is no help for me now. You will sometimes think of me then, as you shall see the smoke of my woe rising up darkly athwart the glorious heavens. After I have been there a long, long time, you will sometimes think that I, who once lived by your side, am there. O remember, you cannot pray for me then; but you will remember that once you might have warned and might have saved me.' -Charles G. Finney

"MANY DO NOT RECOGNIZE the fact as they ought, that Satan has got men fast asleep in sin and that it is his great device to keep them so. He does not care what we do if he can do that. We may sing songs about the sweet by and by, preach sermons and say prayers until doomsday, and he will never concern himself about us, if we don't wake anybody up. But if we awake the sleeping sinner he will gnash on us with his teeth. This is our work - to wake people up." -Catherine Booth

Thomas Watson

"Christ was in an agony at

prayer (Luke 22: 44). Many

when they pray are rather in a

lethargy, than in an agony.



Samuel M. Zwemer



David Brainerd



Samuel Chadwick



Catherine Booth

When they are about the world they are all fire; when they are at prayer, they are all Ice."

"He that leaves off prayer leaves off the fear of God. 'You cast off fear, and restrain prayer before God' (Job 15: 4). A man that leaves off prayer is capable of any wickedness. When Saul had given up inquiring of God he went to the witch of Endor."

"How hard is it sometimes to

"A man set on fire is an apostle of his age. And the only one who can kindle the spark of light and fire on the hearth where it has died down is He who has revealed Himself as the God of fire, our Lord Jesus Christ. 'Our God is a consuming fire'...Tell me, is your ministry a burning and shining light, or a smoking wick, slowly dying out to ashes? ...It is a strange custom that we should supply a minister with

"Oh! one hour with God infinitely exceeds all the pleasures and delights of this lower world."

"I think my soul never was in such an agony before. I felt no restraint, for the treasures of divine grace were opened to me. I wrestled for absent friends, for the ingathering of souls, for multitudes of poor souls, and for many that I thought were the children of God, in many distant places. I was in such an agony, for half an hour before sunset, till near dark, that I was all over wet with sweat: but yet it seemed to me that I had wasted away the day, and had done nothing. Oh! my dear Savior did sweat blood for poor souls!"

"I love to live on the brink of eternity."

"First, Resolve upon, and daily endeavour to practise, a life of seriousness and strict sobriety."

"I fear God never showed mercy to one so vile as I."

"If you hope for happiness in the world, hope for it from God, and not from the world."

"God the Holy Ghost calls for crusaders... How many ministers would be in church if it were not their job? The answer will be found in the number who never go to the job that is outside."

"We give ourselves to prayer. We preach a Gospel that saves to the uttermost, and witness to its power. We do not argue about worldliness; we witness. We do not discuss philosophy; we preach the Gospel. We do not speculate about the destiny of sinners; we pluck them as brands from the burning. We ask no man's patronage. We beg no man's money. We fear no man's frown...Let no man join us who is afraid, and we want

"I am tired of hearing the words 'I can't'. Jeremiah said, 'I am a child'; but the Lord didn't pat him on the back and say, Jeremiah, that is very good, I like that in you; your humility is beautiful.' Oh no! God didn't want any such mock humility. He reproved and rebuked it. I do not like the humility that is too humble to do as it is bid. When my children are too humble to do as they are bid, I pretty soon find a way to make them. I say, 'Go and do it' The Lord wants us to 'go and do it'."

"We may sing songs about the sweet by and by, preach sermons and say prayers until doomsday, and the Devil will

"Oh! one hour with God infinitely exceeds all the pleasures and delights of this lower world. I love to live on the brink of eternity."

-David Brainerd

get leave of hearts to seek God! Jesus Christ went more willingly to the cross than we do to the throne of grace."

a glass of water; if only we could supply him with a bonfire in the pulpit, a spiritual bonfire. We need the dynamic of a flaming ministry that will set the Church on fire."

"Prayer is self-discipline. The effort to realize the presence and power of God stretches the sinews of the soul and hardens its muscles."

"True prayer will achieve just as much as it costs us." -Samuel M. Zwemer

none but those who are saved, sanctified and aflame with the fire of the Holy Ghost."

"The Church gives more time, thought, and money to recreation and sport than to prayer."

never concern himself about us, if we don't wake anybody up. But if we awake the sleeping sinner he will gnash on us with his teeth. This is our work - to wake people up."

"BRETHREN, DO SOMETHING; do something, do something! While societies and unions make constitutions, let us win souls. I pray you, be men of action all of you. Get to work and quit yourselves like men. Old Suvarov's idea of war is mine: 'Forward and strike! No theory! Attack! Form a column! Charge bayonets! Plunge into the center of the enemy! Our one aim is to win souls; and this we are not to talk about, but do in the power of God!'" -Charles Spurgeon

"PERHAPS IF THERE WERE MORE of that intense distress for souls that leads to tears, we should more frequently see the results we desire. Sometimes it may be that while we are complaining of the hardness of the hearts of those we are seeking to benefit, the hardness of our own hearts and our feeble apprehension of the solemn reality of eternal things may be the true cause of our want of success." -Hudson Taylor

"THE MAN WHOSE LITTLE SERMON is 'repent' sets himself against his age, and will for the time being be battered mercilessly by the age whose moral tone he challenges. There is but one end for such a man - 'off with his head!' You had better not try to preach repentance until you have pledged your head to heaven." -Joseph Parker

"OH, TO REALIZE THAT SOULS, precious, never dying souls, are perishing all around us, going out into the blackness of darkness and despair, eternally lost, and yet to feel no anguish, shed no tears, know no travail! How little we know of the compassion of Jesus!" -Oswald J. Smith



William Bramwell

"FOR THUS SAITH THE LORD... 'Seek Me and Live'." (Amos 5:4). The life of William Bramwell is a vivid picture of one who followed hard after God and as a result truly lived. Motivated by a fervent love and a haunting view of eternity, William Bramwell sought the face of Jesus with all his heart. "Mr. Bramwell's love for God was always increasing. The beauties of holiness inflamed his soul with an intense desire to be like God and in all things to glorify Him." It is in a letter written by Mr. Bramwell in 1807 that we get a glimpse of the driving passions that motivated his life and ministry. He writes, "Pray, O pray, my brother! never, never quit your hold of the fullness of God; for time is nearly over, and if this fullness be lost it will be lost forever. I am astonished that we do not pray more, yea, that we do not live every moment as on the brink of the eternal world, and in the blessed expectation of that glorious country." Again he writes, "I grieve that my love is no stronger, and that I am no more like Him. I wonder at His glory, and sink before Him with shame. How is it that the soul being of such value, and God so great, eternity so near and yet we are so little moved?"

Bramwell sought to redeem every moment for the kingdom of God. "He would spend two, three, four, five and sometimes six hours in prayer and reflection. He often entered his room at nine o'clock in the morning and did not leave till three in the afternoon." Year after year Mr. Bramwell's ministry of prayer and preaching produced lasting results. Churches were revived, the sick were healed and sinners were saved to the uttermost. Mr. Bramwell's success, without question was the fruit of his ever growing hunger for more of Jesus. By faith he reaped the rewards of his earnest and constant seeking.

Like all who enjoy such intense seasons of prayer, Mr. Bramwell exchanged his cares for the cares and sorrows of Jesus Christ. The weight of a lost world and a struggling Church time and again brought him to his knees in travailing prayer. "The Holy Spirit awakened in his heart a deep sympathy for perishing souls. He saw multitudes around him in the broad way to destruction, and longed to snatch them as brands from the fire."



John Oxtoby

A CALL FOR REVIVAL presupposes the decline and weakness of the Church. The rise of the Primitive Methodists in the 19th century was the result of the decline of England's early Methodism. The Primitive Methodist movement endeavored to return to the Christianity as taught and practiced by John Wesley. Only sixteen years after John Wesley's death, the English Methodist Conference found itself in conflict with some of its most zealous ministers. These ministers were eventually expelled from the Conference for holding camp meetings and open-air services. Many in the Conference considered such meetings out of order and void of proper supervision. What had been esteemed by Wesley had become despised by his successors. Like the Wesley's, the Primitive Methodists followed the pillar of fire, rather than the traditions of men which make void the commandments of God. This pillar of revival fire is always best seen from the heights of bent and callused knees.

Chief among the Primitive Methodists' praying men was John Oxtoby, affectionately known as "Praying Johnny". Praying Johnny was not known for his culture or great intellect, he possessed neither. What he possessed was the faith that moves mountains. His speech and words were not considered eloquent to the ears of men, yet they were always sweet to the Father's ear. "Six hours each day he usually spent on his knees, pleading with God, in behalf of himself, the Church and sinners."

"When travailing in anguish for a revival in the neighborhood in which he was laboring and when deeply anxious to see the glory of the Lord revealed, he spent many hours in secluded retirement; and has sometimes in this manner devoted whole days and nights to God."

Often in answer to his public prayers whole assemblies were slain by the power of the Holy Spirit. Strong men struck with conviction fell to their knees and cried for mercy. Through the testimony of John Oxtoby's prayer life, Jesus Christ was seen not only as a God who hears, but also as a God who speaks. On behalf of despairing saints, Praying Johnny touched the heart of Jesus and brought back precise words of direction and encouragement.



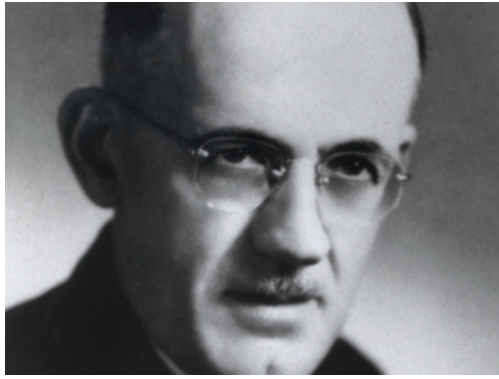
John Smith

JOHN SMITH HAS often been called, "The Man with Calloused Knees". Though his name was quite common, there was nothing common about him. He was distinguished from countless others of the same name by the title of, "John Smith - the Revivalist". Like his father before him, he was respected as a zealous and passionate, preacher of the gospel. He labored among the Wesleyan Methodists in England, beginning in 1816. Like many of God's mighty men of prayer, Mr. Smith's life seemed to be cut short. After only 15 years of faithful service he died at age 37 in the year 1831.

"Constant communion with God was at the foundation of Mr. Smith's great usefulness. In this he was surpassed by none of any age. Whole nights were often given up to prayer." His day often literally revolved around times of travailing prayer. "He arose at four o'clock in the morning, and throwing himself before the mercy-seat, for three hours wrestled with God in mighty prayer. . . Immediately after breakfast and family worship he would again retire with his Bible into his study, and spend until near noon in the same hallowed employment. Here unquestionably was the great secret of his power in public prayer and in preaching. The Lord who sees in secret, rewarded him openly. Every sermon was sanctified by prayer."

Often as he prayed he would wrestle with God till a considerable part of the floor of his study was wet with tears. Some may question if such sacrificial praying was really necessary. The worth of these extended seasons of prayer was obvious once Mr. Smith stepped into the pulpit. The following narrative gives us a brief glimpse of John Smith's anointed preaching. "The Spirit of God descended upon the congregation; the deep attentive silence at the commencement of the discourse was soon interrupted by sobs and moans and followed by loud and piercing cries for mercy as one after another the hearers were pricked to the heart, and the strongholds of Satan were beaten down."

David Smithers - A Church historian that has a passion to see revival that will send out missionaries in this generation. Founded a ministry awakeandgo.com where you can access his writings.



Causes of a Dozing Church

WHAT IS THE PRESENT condition of the evangelical church? The bulk of Christians are asleep. I do not mean that the bulk of Christians who come to evangelical churches are not converted, because if I meant that I would say they were dead and never had been born again. But I say they are asleep. It is possible to be morally asleep yet mentally, intellectually, physically and theologically alert.

The present condition is that we are asleep. These sleeping Christians do two things that God must grieve over. One is that they control church affairs. We are democratic, and if we do not like a pastor we give him the bounce or pray that he will get another call. Then when the time comes we vote in whom we want and vote out whom we do not want. Church people control church affairs because they are intellectually, mentally and physically awake, but they may be morally and spiritually asleep. That is, they are so far down in the rut that they do not see up. Many people who are asleep control church affairs. It gets into whole conferences. Representatives will meet at the expense of the local church people. They will read minutes and pass resolutions, but they are asleep.

You know they are asleep by the way they talk as soon as the benediction is pronounced and they have adjourned. You know they are asleep by their conduct, the things they are interested in or lack interest in, yet they control church affairs. The second thing sleeping Christians do is set the standards for new Christians. When you bring in a newly converted Christian, he or she automatically takes on the coloration, general mood and temperature of the solemn seats around him or her. Pretty soon he or she is where they are, and once again there are no good examples of the Christian life.

A.W. Tozer (1897-1963) - Known as the "20th century prophet" his writings and preaching have stirred and brought many to a deeper walk with God. Pastored in the Alliance church movement for many years..

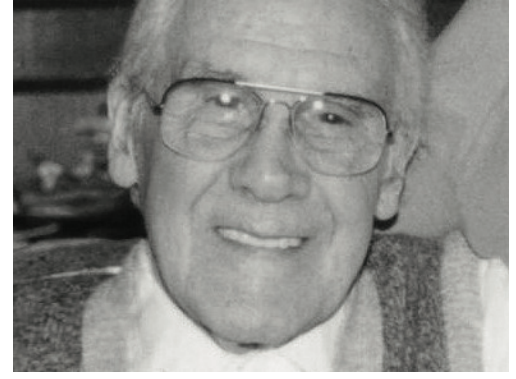


The Sprinkling Of Blood

"WE ARE COME TO THE blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."—Hebrews 12:24. Reader, have you come to the blood of sprinkling? The question is not whether you have come to a knowledge of doctrine, or an observance of ceremonies, or to a certain form of experience, but have you come to the blood of Jesus? The blood of Jesus is the life of all vital godliness. If you have truly come to Jesus, we know how you came—the Holy Spirit sweetly brought you there. You came to the blood of sprinkling with no merits of your own. Guilty, lost, and helpless, you came to take that blood, and that blood alone, as your everlasting hope. You came to the cross of Christ, with a trembling and an aching heart; and oh! what a precious sound it was to you to hear the voice of the blood of Jesus!

The dropping of His blood is as the music of heaven to the penitent sons of earth. We are full of sin, but the Saviour bids us lift our eyes to Him, and as we gaze upon His streaming wounds, each drop of blood, as it falls, cries, "It is finished; I have made an end of sin; I have brought in everlasting righteousness." Oh! sweet language of the precious blood of Jesus! If you have come to that blood once, you will come to it constantly. Your life will be "Looking unto Jesus." Your whole conduct will be epitomized in this—"To whom coming." Not to whom I have come, but to whom I am always coming. If thou hast ever come to the blood of sprinkling, thou wilt feel thy need of coming to it every day. He who does not desire to wash in it every day, has never washed in it at all. The believer ever feels it to be his joy and privilege that there is still a fountain opened. Past experiences are doubtful food for Christians; a present coming to Christ alone can give us joy and comfort. This morning let us sprinkle our door-post fresh with blood, and then feast upon the Lamb, assured that the destroying angel must pass us by.

C.H. Spurgeon (1834-1892) - British Baptist preacher known as the "prince of preachers." He wrote volumes of works that are still reprinted in our day. Used to bring many souls to Christ in England.



Today's Sleeping Giant

TODAY LUCIFER IS PROBABLY surveying the church just as Bonaparte did China. One can almost behold the fear in his eyes as he thinks of the Church's unmeasured potential and growls, "Let the Church sleep! If she wakes, she will shake the world." Is not the Church the sleeping giant of today?

God pity us that after years of writing, using mountains of paper and rivers of ink, exhausting flashy terminology about the biggest revival meetings in history, we are still faced with gross corruption in every nation, as well as with the most prayerless church age since Pentecost.

This is a plea for the return of the supernatural; but I must also give this a word of explanation. For a decade, all over this land there has been a ministry of the miraculous (more or less), and thank God for all who honor Him and remain faithful. But having said that, here is a plea for sane thinking and a spiritual evaluation of the evangelistic field. To a large degree, have we not substituted seeing for hearing? In Acts, Philip the evangelist could have transferred the Ethiopian eunuch to a city seething with revival fever where the eunuch could have seen "the lame leap like a hart and the tongue of the dumb sing." Instead, he pitched right into the Word of the living God, and beginning at the same Scripture preached unto him Jesus. We need the miraculous but we also need Christ-centered teaching. Our crucified, exalted Christ must have preeminence over all other slants of truth, for while the Church is languishing, the world is perishing. "Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord..." (Isaiah 51:9)

Truth lies fallen in the street!

Leonard Ravenhill (1907-1994) - Preached in America for revival until his death. One of the foremost authorities on revival in the 20th century, namely with the book "Why Revival Tarries."



The Devil And Religion

"The devil does not care how religious you are. You can act as pious and look as sanctimonious as a monk of a hundred years ago, and he does not care at all..."

The Devil Does Not Care

THE DEVIL DOES NOT CARE how religious you are. You can act as pious and look as sanctimonious as a monk of a hundred years ago, and he does not care at all. You can join the church or denomination of your choice, or join all of them, for aught he cares; in fact, it would not surprise us to learn that it rather pleases his satanic majesty to have folks join church on certain conditions. You can be baptized with water, and have it anyway you want it, and as often and as much as you wish, and he will make no serious objections to the entire program. You can worship God the Father, and attend strictly to your church duties, and he will not object.

The Devil Will Not Lose Sleep

You can pour out your money to erect costly buildings, and equip and furnish them with all that money can purchase, and the devil will not lose any sleep over it. You can be a strict disciplinarian, and punctually close up your business on Saturday night, and not think of your business again until

Monday morning; nor will it make the devil mad to have you remain away from the Sunday baseball and Sunday theater, or refuse to ride on Sunday trains, or refuse to allow Sunday newspapers delivered at your door; he will not get mad, and tear around, or go roaring up and down the earth, if you refrain from all these things. But there is one vital point that he is anxious about these last days, and that is that you leave alone the divinity of Jesus Christ, and the power of His blood to cleanse you from all sin. Do that, and the devil will be satisfied with you.

That is the one point that is giving the powers of Hell more concern these days than anything else. It is not the erecting of the fine and costly church edifices up and down this land; it is not the big, popular, sign-the-card, join-the-church, meet-your-mother-in-the-sky, so-called revivals, that put great crowds of unregenerate men and women into the churches all under the cloak of God's salvation, that causes the devil to worry; it is not the steady decline of spirituality in the churches and their steady drift

to worldliness and formality, their constant drift to Universalism and Unitarianism, that sets Hell in an uproar. No, indeed, but it is the upholding of the divinity of Christ and His all-atoning blood that washes and makes the heart clean, that causes consternation in Hell.

In God We Trust

We put on our coin "In God We Trust," and when it was removed there was a great howl and a cry until it was placed back on the coin again. Do you think the devil cared much about that racket that was made because it was taken off? Not so long as we put a Unitarian in the Presidential chair, who by his belief denies the divinity of the Son of God; not so long as we have our Senate opened with prayer by a man who by his belief makes Jesus Christ, the Son of God, an illegitimate child; and we have no doubt that many who made such a fuss about the coin, helped to put an office-seeker, a wine-bibber and a clog-dancer in for President. Now, how much concern do you suppose the prayer of such persons causes the devil? Do you suppose he lays awake at

night to contrive some plan whereby he can defeat the good such folks can do for the kingdom of Heaven? No, my friends; the devil does not care how religious you are, just so you leave alone the divinity of the Son of God and His precious blood that makes our hearts clean in His sight.

Jesus And The Blood

And just as he has led off many churches and gotten their eyes and minds off of Jesus and the Blood, he has done likewise to many individuals, even among those professing a high state of grace. He has some of them seeking after something else beside the Blood, seeking a third blessing of fire and gifts and tongues, and once the mind is turned away from the Blood, it is not far to where the wreck occurs. Oh, he is a devil of a devil, and if he cannot keep a soul from the Blood, then he will try to push that soul on over the precipice and plunge it into darkness.

It was not so far back but we remember an individual who had been used of God to save and bless many souls. He turned from the Blood to a third blessing, a baptism of fire, and went up and down the land promulgating his doctrine. Once off the main line, the end is not far away. It was not long until his fire was found to be the effects of something akin to the red man's fire-water and after being found intoxicated several times, he soon disappeared from the field of action.

Getting Our Eyes Off Jesus And The Blood

As we pen these lines, there come to our mind others who, rich in experience and grace, were wonderfully and marvelously used of God to the salvation of many, and they have spiritual sons and daughters up and down the land; but they got their eyes off of Jesus and the Blood onto something else, and mark the result. No longer do they draw the crowds to hear them tell the old, old story; no longer do large audiences hang upon their words; no longer are their altars lined with weeping, penitent souls seeking salvation, and unless they get their eyes back on Jesus and His blood, their days of usefulness are over.

Only recently we conducted a series of meetings in a certain town where there was a man who had spent much of his former life in that community living in sin, but he had found God and had gone back to tell the story. He came in the meeting, but was not used as much as he thought he should have been. In a few days he began to find fault and criticize, and soon, with his eyes off the Lord, who had done so much for him, he began sitting around with the

unsaved, saying unkind things and finally misrepresenting and impugning the efforts that were being put forth. Just now there lies before me a letter which came in the last mail and it states that the brother in question is now a common horsetrader.

These are not simply isolated cases, but we could fill many pages with recitals of like nature. The Blood alone can wash away our sin; the Blood alone can make us every whit clean. The devil does not care what we do, nor what we profess, not how religious we are, if we only neglect Jesus Christ and His blood. Men may go on erecting magnificent edifices, putting up and endowing great schools of learning, and talk loudly and boast much of the great and glorious country we live in, and the increasing numbers of churches, and mark their advancement by the many additions to them and the amount of money that is raised for religious purposes; but so long as those same churches either deny the divinity of the Son of God and the efficacy of His blood, or are silent regarding the subject, the devil simply smiles and remains undisturbed. The old Book says, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin," and until that is an accomplished fact, no man possesses that holiness without which no man shall see the Lord.

Great God, Help Us!

Great God, help us! Oh, ye professing Church of Christ, arise and hurry! Don't you see Him? There He stands. Watch Him point to the nail prints; see, He lifts the folds of His robe and points to that open, gaping wound! Hear Him cry, "Oh, ye are so slow, why do ye linger when a world is living, suffering, dying without God?" But the preachers write off their little sermonettes, and with studied and measured time and modulated voice, as calmly as though there was no one dying, perishing or going under, read off their little essays to a poor, frozen, starved, worldly crowd, who sit motionless and lifeless in the pen, while the poor, down trodden, helpless, hopeless masses, crying, "Help! Hurry!" are drawn beneath the tide. And the few men of God here and there, with hearts on fire and souls aflame, with burning zeal and with might and main, putting their every Isaac upon the altar, doing their best to stem the tide or grasp one here and there from the awful monster of sin, are looked upon as fanatics and fools.

The Devil Loves To Create Division

The devil likes to create divisions, and if he can do so and get one set of folks to lambasting, cartooning, criticizing, finding fault with or impugning the actions and motives of another set, or a few persons to doing so against a few others, he will be in his element. Know this, that the devil never tries to save men from sin; neither does he lead folks to weep and cry to God to save others from sin. We personally

know of instances where persons making a high profession, have gone into a meeting in which honest effort was being made to get souls to God, and have taken steps to interfere and bring discord into that meeting, and, so far as we could observe, were firm in their belief that they were right in so doing.

Weeping Over Souls From The Devil

Again, we know instances where men and women were on their faces crying to God and weeping over lost souls, when others would speak of their efforts or of the meeting as "being of the devil," and, so far as we could see, those persons thought they were right. We say unto you, the devil wants no better job than that sort of thing. Such persons may think themselves to be right, and go on and die, but unless they turn from such a course, repent, and get back to God, they will wake up to find they have made an awful mistake. All these things can be and are being done under the name of religion.

Millions of saints have suffered martyrdom at the hands of those who professed and believed in religion; and, on down through the ages until the present day, men and women have done despite to the children of God. They thought and died firm in the

belief that they were right, but they will wake up in Hell. Oh, my precious brother, sister, there is a vast difference between having religion and experiencing the salvation that Jesus brought to this world. A religion that does not make you a meek, humble imitator of Jesus Christ,

is not of God; is not godly nor heavenly; it is hellish and of the devil. It may be religion, but it is not salvation.

"Know this, that the devil never tries to save men from sin; neither does he lead folks to weep and cry to God..."

"Doing their best to grasp one here and there from the awful monster of sin, are looked upon as fanatics and fools..."

"Millions of saints have suffered martyrdom at the hands of those who professed and believed in religion..."

Lewis Williams - *We have heard some of these sermons preached with an impressiveness which few spoken messages can ever equal, while thousands listened spellbound* - A. M. Hills.



Supreme Love to God

“Christian duty may appear hard and intolerable to corrupt human nature, but it is easy and delightful to the renewed heart...”

“THOU SHALT LOVE the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.” (Matthew 22:37)

An Epitome Of Christian Duty

This passage is an epitome of Christian duty and comprehends all that God requires of man, including all the duties enjoined in the Decalogue—love to God and man, comprising the whole of experimental and practical Christianity. “On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.” They are iterated again and again in both Testaments. Three of the evangelists—Matthew, Mark and Luke, give us the text.

To recover fallen man from his alienation and corruption, and secure his observance of this commandment, was the great design of Moses and the

prophets in the earlier dispensation and of Christ and the apostles in our dispensation.

First In Importance

“This is the first and great commandment.” It is first in importance, for it comprehends all others. It is first and greatest, not only in comprehension, but in dignity, excellence and duration. It is the statute law in the moral universe, binding equally on all created moral beings from the highest celestial intelligences to the lowest of the human race.

In this great, first commandment, our whole duty is made a love service. How different this from the common error that Christian duty is tedious and burdensome! In the experience of the devoted heart, it is more of a delightful charm than a reluctant con-

straint. Our Lord declared His “yoke” to be “easy” and His “burden” to be “light.” John says, “His commandments are not grievous.”

Easy And Delightful

Christian duty may appear hard and intolerable to corrupt human nature, but it is easy and delightful to the renewed heart. How could it be otherwise, as God’s service is a good service, a useful service and a profitable service! It is not merely tolerable, but delightful. It is an assisted service, hence an easy service. It is a rational spiritual, love service.

The divine requirements are never malevolent, capricious, selfish or arbitrary. They are necessary, being based in the nature and relation of things, and originate in, and harmonize with, infinite wisdom and love. They accord

with our highest interests and happiness and never conflict with them.

The Devoted Soul

To the devoted soul nothing is more agreeable than that which God requires. Faber expressed it thus;

“I worship Thee, sweet will of God,
And all Thy ways adore,
And every day I live I seem
To love Thee more and more.”

John Wood - a preacher in the Wesleyan tradition, wrote the bestseller book, “Perfect Love,” published in 1878.



A Call To Prayer

"But this I do say, that not praying is a clear proof that a person is not yet a true Christian. They cannot really feel their sins. They cannot love God...."

I HAVE LOOKED CAREFULLY over the lives of God's saints in the Bible. I cannot find one whose history much is told us, from Genesis to Revelation, who was not a person of prayer. I find it mentioned as a characteristic of the godly, that "they call on the Father," that "they call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ." I find it recorded as a characteristic of the wicked, that "they call not upon the Lord."

Eminent Christians

I have read the lives of many eminent Christians who have been on earth since the Bible days. Some of them, I see, were rich, and some poor. Some were learned, and some were unlearned. Some of them were Episcopalians, and some were Christians of other names. Some were Calvinists, and some were Arminians. Some have loved to use liturgy, and some to use

none. But one thing, I see, they all had in common. They have all been people of prayer.

Missionary Societies

I have studied reports of missionary societies in our own times. I see with joy that lost men and women are receiving the gospel in various parts of the globe. There are conversions in Africa, in New Zealand, in India, in China. The people converted are naturally unlike one another in every respect. But one striking thing I observe at all the missionary stations: the converted people always pray.

I do not deny that a person may pray without heart and without sincerity. I do not for a moment pretend to say that the mere fact of a persons' praying proves everything about their soul. As in every other part of religion,

so also in this, there may be deception and hypocrisy.

A True Christian?

But this I do say, that not praying is a clear proof that a person is not yet a true Christian. They cannot really feel their sins. They cannot love God. They cannot feel themselves a debtor to Christ. They cannot long after holiness. They cannot desire heaven. They have yet to be born again. They have yet to be made a new creature. They may boast confidently of election, grace, faith, hope and knowledge, and deceive ignorant people. But you may rest assured it is all vain talk if they do not pray.

Prayer is to faith what breath is to the body. How a person can live and not breathe is past my comprehension,

and how a person can believe and not pray is past my comprehension too.

Never be surprised if you hear ministers of the gospel dwelling much on the importance of prayer. This is the point they want to bring to you. They want to know that you pray. Your views of doctrine may be correct. Your love of Protestantism may be warm and unmistakable. But still this may be nothing more than head knowledge and party spirit. They want to know whether you are actually acquainted with the throne of grace, and whether you can speak to God as well as speak about God.

J.C. Ryle (1816-1900) - A Bishop in the Anglican Church. Was a non-conformist in spirit. Wrote many strong, prophetic, enduring books.



Words to Winners of Souls

"'What man on earth is so pernicious a drone as an idle minister?' said Cecil. And Fletcher remarked well that 'lukewarm pastors made careless Christians'..."

A Few Good Fervent Men

"HOW MUCH MORE WOULD a few good and fervent men effect in the ministry than a multitude of lukewarm ones!" said Oecolampadius, the Swiss Reformer -- a man who had been taught by experience, and who has recorded that experience for the benefit of other churches and other days.

The mere multiplying of men calling themselves ministers of Christ will avail little. They may be but "cumberers of the ground." They may be like Achan, troubling the camp; or perhaps Jonah, raising the tempest. Even when sound in the faith, through unbelief, lukewarmness and slothful formality, they may do irreparable injury to the cause of Christ, freezing and withering up all spiritual life around them. The lukewarm ministry of one who is theoretically orthodox is often more extensively and fatally ruinous to souls than that of one grossly inconsistent or flagrantly heretical. "What man on earth is so pernicious a drone as an idle minister?" said Cecil. And

Fletcher remarked well that "lukewarm pastors made careless Christians." Can the multiplication of such ministers, to whatever amount, be counted a blessing to a people?

When the church of Christ, in all her denominations, returns to primitive example, and walking in apostolical footsteps seeks to be conformed more closely to inspired models, allowing nothing that pertains to earth to come between her and her living Head, then will she give more careful heed to see that the men to whom she intrusts the care of souls, however learned and able, should be yet more distinguished by their spirituality, zeal, faith and love.

In comparing Baxter and Orton, the biographer of the former remarks that "Baxter would have set the world on fire while Orton was lighting a match." How true! Yet not true alone of Baxter or of Orton. These two individuals are representatives of two classes in the church of Christ in every age and of every denomination. The latter class are far the more numerous: the Ortons you

may count by hundreds, the Baxters by tens; yet who would not prefer a solitary specimen of the one to a thousand of the other?

Baxter's Burning Sincerity

"When he spoke of weighty soul concerns," says one of his contemporaries of Baxter, "you might find his very spirit drenched therein." No wonder that he was blessed with such amazing success! Men felt that in listening to him they were in contact with one who was dealing with realities of infinite moment.

This is one of the secrets of ministerial strength and ministerial success And who can say how much of the overflowing infidelity of the present day is owing not only to the lack of spiritual instructors-not merely to the existence of grossly unfaithful and inconsistent ones-but to the coldness of many who are reputed sound and faithful. Men can not but feel that if religion is worth anything, it is worth everything; that if it calls for any measure of zeal and warmth, it will jus-

tify the utmost degrees of these; and that there is no consistent medium between reckless atheism and the intensest warmth of religious zeal. Men may dislike, detest, scoff at, persecute the latter, yet their consciences are all the while silently reminding them that if there be a God and a Saviour, a heaven and a hell, anything short of such life and love is hypocrisy, dishonesty, perjury!

And thus the lesson they learn from the lifeless discourses of the class we are alluding to is, that since these men do not believe the doctrines they are preaching there is no need of their hearers believing them; if ministers only believe them because they make their living by them, why should those who make nothing by them scruple about denying them?

Rash Preaching

"Rash preaching," said Rowland Hill, "disgusts; timid preaching leaves poor souls fast asleep; bold preaching is the only preaching that is owned of God."

It is not merely unsoundness in faith, nor negligence in duty, nor open inconsistency of life that mars the ministerial work and ruins souls. A man may be free from all scandal either in creed or conduct, and yet may be a most grievous obstruction in the way of all spiritual good to his people. He may be a dry and empty cistern, notwithstanding his orthodoxy. He may be freezing or blasting life at the very time he is speaking of the way of life. He may be repelling men from the cross even when he is in words proclaiming it. He may be standing between his flock and the blessing even when he is, in outward form, lifting up his hand to bless them. The same words that from warm lips would drop as the rain, or distill as the dew, fall from his lips as the snow or hail, chilling all spiritual warmth and blighting all spiritual life. How many souls have been lost for want of earnestness, want of solemnity, want of love in the preacher, even when the words uttered were precious and true.

Our One Object: to Win Souls

We take for granted that the object of the Christian ministry is to convert sinners and to edify the body of Christ. No faithful minister can possibly rest short of this. Applause, fame, popularity, honor, wealth - all these are vain. If souls are not won, if saints are not matured, our ministry itself is vain.

The question, therefore, which each of us has to answer to his own conscience is, "Has it been the end of my ministry, has it been the desire of my

heart to save the lost and guide the saved? Is this my aim in every sermon I preach, in every visit I pay? Is it under the influence of this feeling that I continually live and walk and speak? Is it for this I pray and toil and fast and weep? Is it for this I spend and am spent, counting it, next to the salvation of my own soul, my chiefest joy to be the instrument of saving others? Is it for this that I exist? To accomplish this would I gladly die? Have I seen the pleasure of the

Lord prospering in my hand? Have I seen souls converted under my ministry? Have God's people found refreshment from my lips, and gone upon their way rejoicing, or have I seen no fruit of my labors, and yet content to remain unblest? Am I satisfied to preach, and yet not know of one saving impression made, one sinner awakened?"

Nothing short of positive success can satisfy a true minister of Christ. His plans may proceed smoothly and his external machinery may work steadily, but without actual fruit in the saving of souls he counts all these as nothing. His feeling is: "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you" (Galatians 4:19). And it is this feeling which makes him successful..

The Conversion Of Sinners

"Ministers," said Owen, "are seldom honored with success unless they are continually aiming at the conversion of sinners." The resolution that in the strength and with the blessing of God he will never rest without success, will insure it. It is the man who has made up his mind to confront every difficulty, who has counted the cost and, fixing his eye upon the prize, has determined to fight his way to it - it is such a man that conquers.

The dull apathy of other days is gone. Satan has taken the field actively, and it is best to meet him front to front. Besides, men's consciences are really on edge. God seems extensively striving with them, as before the flood. A breath of the Divine Spirit has passed over the earth, and hence the momentous character of the time, as well as the necessity for improving it so long as it lasts.

The one true goal or resting-place where doubt and weariness, the stings of a pricking conscience, and the longings of an unsatisfied soul would all be quieted, is Christ himself. Not the church, but Christ. Not doctrine, but Christ. Not forms, but Christ. Not ceremonies, but Christ; Christ the God-man, giving His life for ours; sealing the everlasting covenant, and making peace for us through the blood of His cross;

Christ the divine storehouse of all light and truth, "In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Colossians 2:3); Christ the infinite vessel, filled with the Holy Spirit, the Enlightener, the Teacher, the Quickener, the Comforter, so that: 'of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace' (John 1: 16). This, this alone is the vexed soul's refuge, its rock to build on, its home to abide in till the great tempter be bound and every conflict ended in victory.

Meet "Opinion" With the Truth

Let us, then, meet this "earnestness" which is now the boast, but may ere long be the bane, of the age, with that which alone can bring down its feverish pulse, and soothe it into blessed calm, the gospel of the grace of God. All other things are but opiates, drugs, quackeries; this is the divine medicine; this is the sole, the speedy, the eternal cure. It is not by "opinion" that we are to meet "opinion"; it is the Truth of God that we are to wield; and applying the edge of the "sword of the Spirit" to the theories of man (which he proudly calls his "opinions"), make him feel what a web of sophistry and folly he has been weaving for his own entanglement and ruin.

It is not opinions that man needs: it is Truth. It is not theology: it is God. It is not religion: it is Christ. It is not literature and science; but the knowledge of the free love of God in the gift of His only-begotten Son.

"I know not," says Richard Baxter, "what others think, but for my own part I am ashamed of my stupidity, and wonder at myself that I deal not with my own and others' souls as one that looks for the great day of the Lord; and that I can have room for almost any other thoughts and words; and that such astonishing matters do not wholly absorb my mind. I marvel how I can preach of them slightly and coldly; and how I can let men alone in their sins; and that I do not go to them, and beseech them, for the Lord's sake, to repent, however they may take it, and whatever pain and trouble it should cost me.

A Careless, Sleepy Manner?

"I seldom come out of the pulpit but my conscience smiteth me that I have been no more serious and fervent. It accuseth me not so much for want of ornaments and elegance, nor for letting fall an unhandsome word; but it asketh me, 'How couldst thou speak of life and death with such a heart? How couldst thou preach of heaven and hell in such a careless, sleepy manner? Dost thou believe what thou sayest? Art thou in earnest, or in jest? How canst thou tell people that sin is such a thing, and that so much misery is upon them and before them, and be no more affected with it? Shouldst thou not weep over such a people, and should not thy tears interrupt thy words? Shouldst thou not cry

aloud, and show them their transgressions; and entreat and beseech them as for life and death?"

"Truly this is the peal that conscience doth ring in my ears, and yet my drowsy soul will not be awakened. Oh, what a thing is an insensible, hardened heart. O Lord, save us from the plague of infidelity and hardness of heartedness ourselves, or else how shall we be fit instruments of saving others from it? Oh, do that on our souls which thou wouldst use us to do on the souls of others!"

The Minister's True Life And Walk

The true minister must be a true Christian. He must be called by God before he can call others to God. The Apostle Paul thus states the matter: "God . . . hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation" (2 Corinthians 5:18). They were first reconciled, and then they had given to them the ministry of reconciliation. Are we ministers reconciled? It is but reasonable that a man who is to act as a spiritual guide to others should himself know the way of salvation. It has been frequently said that "the way to heaven is blocked up with dead professors"; but is it not true also that the melancholy obstruction is not composed of members of churches only? Let us take heed unto ourselves!

The Minister And Holy Living

As the minister's life is in more than one respect the life of a ministry, let us speak a few words on ministerial holy living.

Let us seek the Lord early. "If my heart be early seasoned with his presence, it will save me of him all day after." Let us see God before man every day. "I ought to pray before seeing any one. Often when I sleep long, or meet with others early, and then have family prayer and breakfast and forenoon callers, it is eleven or twelve o'clock before I begin secret prayer. This is a wretched system. It is unscriptural. Christ rose before day, and went into a solitary place. . . . Family prayer loses much of power and sweetness, and I can do no good to those who come to seek for me. The conscience feels guilty, the soul unfed, the lamp not trimmed. Then, when secret prayer comes, the soul is often out of tune. I feel it far better to begin with God, to see His face first, to get my soul near Him before it is near another.

It is best to have at least one hour alone with God before engaging in anything else. At the same time, I must be careful not to reckon com-

munion with God by minutes or hours, or by solitude." (McCheyne.)

Hear this true servant of Christ exhorting a beloved brother:

"Take heed to thyself. Your own soul is your first and greatest care. You know a sound body alone can work with power, much more a healthy soul. Keep a clear conscience through the blood of the Lamb. Keep up close communion with

God. Study likeness to Him in all things. Read the Bible for your own growth first, then for your people."

"With him," says his biographer, "the commencement of all labor invariably consisted in the preparation of his own soul. The forerunner of each day's visitations was a calm season of private devotion during morning hours. The walls of his chamber were witnesses of his prayerfulness -- I believe of his tears as well as of his cries. The pleasant sound of psalms often issued from his room at an early hour; then followed the reading of the Word for his own sanctification: and few have so fully realized the blessing of the first psalm." Would that it were so with us all! "Devotion," said Bishop Hall, "is the life of religion, the very soul of piety, the highest employment of grace. It is much to be feared that 'we are weak in the pulpit because we are weak in the closet.'"

"Walking With God"

"To restore a commonplace truth," writes Mr. Coleridge, "to its first uncommon luster, you need only translate it into action." Walking with God is a very commonplace truth. Translate this truth into action -- how lustrous it becomes! The phrase, how hackneyed! -- the thing, how rare! It is such a walk -- not an abstract ideal, but a personality, a life which the reader is invited to contemplate. Oh, that we would only set ourselves in right earnest to this rare work of translation!

It is said of the energetic, pious and successful John Berridge that "communion with God was what he enforced in the latter stages of his ministry. It was, indeed, his own meat and drink, and the banquet from which he never appeared to rise." This shows us the source of his great strength. If we were always sitting at this ban-

quet, then it might be recorded of us ere long, as of him, "He was in the first year visited by about a thousand persons under serious impressions."

Study the Speakers, Not the Sermons

To the men even more than to their doctrine we would point the eye of the inquirer who asks, Whence came their success? Why, may not the same success be ours? We may take the sermons of Whitefield or Berridge or Edwards for our study or our pattern, but it is the individuals themselves that we must mainly set before us; it is with the spirit of the men, more than of their works, that we are to be imbued, if we are emulous of a ministry as powerful, as victorious as theirs. They were spiritual men, and walked with God. It is living fellowship with a living Saviour which, transforming us into His image, fits us for being able and successful ministers of the gospel.

Without this nothing else will avail. Neither orthodoxy, nor learning, nor eloquence, nor power of argument, nor zeal, nor fervor, will accomplish aught without this. It is this that gives power to our words and persuasiveness to our arguments, making them either as the balm of Gilead to the wounded spirit or as sharp arrows of the mighty to the conscience of the stout-hearted rebel. From them that walk with Him in holy, happy intercourse, a virtue seems to go forth, a blessed fragrance seems to compass them whithersoever they go. Nearness to Him, intimacy with Him, assimilation to His character -- these are the elements of a ministry of power.

When we can tell our people, "We beheld His glory, and therefore we speak of it; it is

not from report we speak, but we have seen the King in His beauty" -- how lofty the position we occupy! Our power in drawing men to Christ springs chiefly from the fulness of our personal joy in Him, and the nearness of our personal communion with Him. The countenance that reflects most of Christ, and shines most with His love and grace, is most fitted to attract the gaze of a careless, giddy world, and win restless souls from the fascinations of creature-love and creature-beauty. A ministry of power must be the fruit of a holy, peaceful, loving intimacy with the Lord.

Faithfulness Essential to Success

"The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity" (Malachi 2:6). Let us observe the connection here declared to subsist between faithfulness and success in the work of the ministry;

*"Take heed to thyself.
Your own soul is your
first and greatest care.
Keep a clear conscience
through the blood..."*

*"I feel it far better to be-
gin with God, to see His
face first, to get my soul
near Him before it is near
another...."*

between a godly life and the "turning away many from iniquity." The end for which we first took office, as we declared at ordination, was the saving of souls; the end for which we still live and labor is the same; the means to this end are a holy life and a faithful fulfillment of our ministry.

The connection between these two things is close and sure. We are entitled to calculate upon it. We are called upon to pray and labor with the confident expectation of its being realized; and where it is not, to examine ourselves with all diligence, lest the cause of the failure be found in ourselves; in our want of faith, love, prayer, zeal and warmth, spirituality and holiness of life; for it is by these that the Holy Spirit is grieved away. Success is attainable; success is desirable; success is promised by God; and nothing on earth can be more bitter to the soul of a faithful minister than the want of it. To walk with God, and to be faithful to our trust, is declared to be the certain way of attaining it. Oh, how much depends on the holiness of our life, the consistency of our character, the heavenliness of our walk and conversation!

Circumspectness Of Life!

Our position is such that we cannot remain neutral. Our life cannot be one of harmless obscurity. We must either repel or attract - save or ruin souls! How loud, then, the call, how strong the motive, to spirituality of soul and circumspectness of life! How solemn the warning against worldly-mindedness and vanity, against levity and frivolity, against negligence, sloth and cold formality!

Of all men, a minister of Christ is especially called to walk with God. Everything depends on this; his own peace and joy, his own future reward at the coming of the Lord. But especially does God point to this as the true and sure way of securing the blessing. This is the grand secret of ministerial success. One who walks with God reflects the light of His countenance upon a benighted world; and the closer he walks, the more of this light does he reflect. One who walks with God carries in his very air and countenance a sweet serenity and holy joy that diffuses tranquility around. One who walks with God receives and imparts life whithersoever he goes; as it is written, out of him "shall flow rivers of living water" (John 7:38). He is not merely the world's light but the world's fountain, dispensing the water of life on every side and making the barren waste to blossom as the rose. He waters the world's wilderness as he moves along his peaceful course. His life is blessed; his example is blessed; his intercourse is blessed; his words are blessed; his ministry is blessed! Souls are saved, sinners are converted, and many are turned from their iniquity.

"O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God . . . O our God, what shall we say after this?" - EZRA 9:6,10.

To deliver sermons on each returning Lord's Day, to administer the Lord's Supper stately, to pay an occasional visit to those who request it, to attend religious meetings -- this, we fear, sums up the ministerial life of multitudes who are, by profession, overseers of the flock of Christ. An incumbency of thirty, forty or fifty years often yields no more than this. So many sermons, so many baptisms, so many sacraments, so many visits, so many meetings of various kinds--these are all the pastoral annals, the parish records, the ALL of a lifetime's ministry to many! Of souls that have been saved, such a record could make no mention.

Multitudes Are Perishing

Multitudes have perished under such a ministry; the judgment only will disclose whether so much as one has been saved. There might be learning, but there was no tongue of the learned to speak a word in season to him that is weary. There might be wisdom, but it certainly was not the wisdom that "winneth souls." There might even be the sound of the gospel, but it seemed to contain no glad tidings at all; it was not sounded forth from warm lips into startled ears as the message of eternal life -- "the glorious gospel of the blessed God." Men lived, and it was never asked of them by their minister whether they were born again! Men sickened, sent for the minister and received a prayer upon their death-beds as their passport into heaven. Men died, and were buried where all their fathers had been laid; there was a prayer at their funeral and decent respects to their remains; but their souls went up to the judgment seat unthought of, uncared for; no man, not even the minister who had vowed to watch for them, having said to them, Are you ready? - or warned them to flee from the wrath to come.

Spiritual Desolations That Prevail

Is not this description too true of many a district and many a minister? We do not speak in anger; we do not speak in scorn: we ask the question solemnly and earnestly. It needs an answer. If ever there was a time when there should be "great searching of heart" and frank acknowledgment of unfaithfulness, it is now when God is visiting us - visiting us both in judgment and mercy. We speak in brotherly kindness; surely the answer should not be of wrath and bitterness. And if this description be true, what sin

must there be in ministers and people! How great must be the spiritual desolation that prevails! Surely there is something in such a case grievously wrong; something which calls for solemn self-examination in every minister; something which requires deep repentance.

The Tragedy of a Barren Ministry

Fields plowed and sown, yet yielding no fruit! Machinery constantly in motion, yet all without one particle of produce! Nets cast into the sea, and spread wide, yet no fishes inclosed! All this for years -- for a lifetime! How strange! Yet it is true. There is neither fancy nor exaggeration in the matter. Question some ministers, and what other account can they give? They can tell you of sermons preached, but of sermons blessed they can say nothing. They can speak of discourses that were admired and praised, but of discourses

that have been made effectual by the Holy Spirit they can not speak. They can tell you how many have been baptized, how many communicants admitted; but of souls awakened, converted, ripening in grace, they can give no account. They can enumerate the sacraments they have dispensed; but as to whether any of them have been "times of refreshing" or times of awak-

ening, they can not say. They can tell you what and how many cases of discipline have passed through their hands; but whether any of these have issued in godly sorrow for sin, whether the professed penitents who were absolved by them gave evidence of being "washed and sanctified and justified," they can give no information; they never thought of such an issue!

Unprayed And Unwarned!

They can tell what is the attendance at Sunday school, and what are the abilities of the teacher; but how many of these precious little ones whom they have vowed to feed are seeking the Lord they know not; or whether their teacher be a man of prayer and piety they can not say. Perhaps they would deem it rashness and presumption, if not fanaticism, to inquire. And yet they have sworn, before men and angels, to watch for their souls as they that must give account! But oh, of what use are sermons, sacraments, schools, if souls are left to perish; if living religion be lost sight of; if the Holy Spirit be not sought; if men are left to grow up and die unpitied, unprayed for, unwarned!

Horatius Bonar (1808-1889) - A leader of the Presbyterian Church in Scotland. He wrote many famous hymns and books. Experienced revival under his ministry in Scotland..

Quotable Quotes...

Charles Finney

"Ministers often preach about the Gospel instead of preaching the Gospel. They often preach about sinners instead of preaching to them."

Leonard Ravenhill

"The attitude of the average Christian today is relax and be raptured. But He is coming... and when God gets angry you've no idea what it is. Like a thousand volcanoes exploding. He has appointed a day in which He is going to judge the world and the poor blind world doesn't know much about it and the poor blind church doesn't think much about it now."

C.T. Studd

"Let us not glide through this world and then slip quietly into heaven, without having blown the trumpet loud and long for our Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Let us see to it that the devil will hold a thanksgiving service in hell, when he gets the news of our departure from the field of battle."

Leonard Ravenhill

"If Jesus had preached the same message that ministers preach today, He would never have been crucified."

David Brainerd

"I care not where I go, or how I live, or what I endure so that I may save souls. When I sleep I dream of them; when I awake they are first in my thoughts...no amount of scholastic attainment, of able and profound exposition of brilliant and stirring eloquence can atone for the absence of a deep impassioned sympathetic love for human souls."

The Old Paths
P.O. Box 584
Regina, SK,
Canada, S4P 3A3